GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1814
ANSWERED ON:03.03.2003
CROP FORECAST SYSTEM
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of crop forecast system;

(b) whether updating of crop forecast reports is underway;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the State which have been asked to update crop forecast reports?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) to (d): The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation (DAC) prepares the forecasts of production of principal crops with reference to the agriculture year (July − June) four times during a year, primarily on the basis of the information obtained from the State Governments. These forecasts are referred to as the First Advance Estimates, the Second Advance Estimates, the Third Advance Estimates and the Fourth Advance Estimates, and are released at quarterly intervals. For example, with reference to the agriculture year 2001-02, the time schedule of the estimates was as under:

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First Advance Estimates: September 2001
Second Advance Estimates: January 2002
Third Advance Estimates: April 2002
Fourth Advance Estimates: June 2002
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In the beginning of an agricultural season, when the sowing operations are at initial stages, the assessments of the State Governments about the area coverage under different crops are generally based on visual observations made by the field officers. However, with the passage of time, more specific information, including that of area coverage based on Timely Reporting Scheme (TRS) and yield rates based on Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs), flows to the State Governments, who update their estimates based on this information and forward the same to the DAC.

The DAC holds a weekly meeting of Crop & Weather Watch Group (CWWG), in which the crop prospects are discussed on the basis of latest position of crop and weather situation in different parts of the country. In these meetings, which are attended by representatives of India Meteorological Department, National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting, Central Water Commission, and experts from various Divisions of DAC, detailed deliberations take place on the various aspects having bearing on crop production like rainfall, temperature & other weather conditions, availability of water in major reservoirs and availability/ supply of inputs like seeds, fertilizers, credit and pesticides. The estimates of likely production of crops received from the States are reviewed in light of the information obtained in the meetings of the CWWG. These inputs are supplemented/ complemented, with the information received from the Space Application Centre (SAC), Ahamedabad based on remote sensing technology as also the past practices and trends prevalent in various States.

During the agriculture year 2002-03, the sowing of Kharif crops had been delayed in many parts of the country, due to which the Government had released only a Quick Assessment of Kharif production in September 2002. The First Advance Estimates, covering the kharif crops of 2002-03 were released on 12.11.2002, while the Second Advance Estimates, covering both kharif and rabi, were released on 10.2.2003. The next forecast for 2002-03 would be made during April 2003, coinciding with the holding of the National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign, 2003-04. All the major States have been requested to furnish the updated information by middle of March 2003.